

## Message Text

SECRET

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14-12

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 /026 W

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O 190840Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3831

INFO COMUSSAG NKP THAILAND IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC HONOLULU IMMEDIATE

COMIPAC HONOLULU IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SAIGON 3122

EXDIS NOFORN MILITARY ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

FOLLOWING TEL RECEIVED FROM DANANG MARCH 19 SENT EMBASSY SAIGON  
H/W REPEATED TO YOU. QTE:

S E C R E T DANANG 0258

EXDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, SREF, SOCI, VS

SUBJECT: LTG TRUONG'S COMMENTS ON PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT

1. APO MET EVENING MARCH 18 WITH MR-1/I CORPS COMMANDER LT.  
GEN. NGO QUANG TRUONG, AND DISCUSSED PRIME MINISTER TRAN  
THIEN KHIE'S MARCH 18 VISIT TO DANANG.

2. TRUONG CONFIRMED THAT KHIEM HAD PROMISED TO GRANT ASSISTANCE  
TO CIVILIANS IN MR-1 WHO WISHED TO RELOCATE SOUTH. KHIEM, WHO  
ACCORDING TO TRUONG BROUGHT HIS ENTIRE CABINET WITH HIM AT  
TRUONG'S REQUEST, TOLD TRUONG IT WOULD TAKE PERHAPS FOUR DAYS TO  
DEVELOP MORE DETAILED PLANS BUT SAID HE WOULD ATTEMPT TO PROVIDE  
SEA TRANSPORT FOR THE EVACUEES.

3. TRUONG SAID THAT EVEN THOUGH KHIEM HAD APPROVED THE PLAN TO  
AID THOSE WISHING TO DEPART TO REGION, KHIEM DID NOT GENUINELY

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SEEM TO TRUONG TO AS YET FULLY UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION AND THE

NUMBERS WHICH MIGHT WELL BE INVOLVED. ALTHOUGH AS OF THE MORNING OF MARCH 18, TRUONG'S PROVINCE CHIEFS BRIEFED THAT UPWARDS OF 350,000 PERSONS HAD INDICATED THEIR DESIRE TO MOVE SOUTH, KHIEX INSISTED THAT NO MORE THAN 100,000 WOULD ACTUALLY CHOOSE TO RELOCATE. TRUONG SAID THAT KHIEM INSISTED THAT THE PEOPLE WOULD NOT ACTUALLY WISH TO LEAVE THEIR LAND. TRUONG SAID HE HAD EXPLAINED TO THE PRIME MINISTER THAT THE CURRENT SITUATION IS DIFFERENT FROM PREVIOUS SITUATIONS IN WHICH PEOPLE HAD TEMPORARILY BEEN FORCED TO LEAVE THEIR LAND. IN THE PAST THE PEOPLE HAD GENERALLY EXPECTED THE RELOCATION TO BE TEMPORARY BECAUSE THEY EXPECTED THE GOVERNMENT TO ATTEMPT TO DEFEND THE TERRITORY AND THEMSELVES. CURRENTLY, TRUONG SAID, WITH THE REMOVAL OF THE AIRBORNE DIVISION FROM MR-1 AND THE TRANSFER OF THE MARINE DIVISION FROM NORTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS TO REPLACE THE DEPARTING AIRBORNE, THE PEOPLE REALIZE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS NO LONGER ABLE TO PROTECT THEM OR THEIR LAND. TRUONG SAID THAT AFTER HIS AFTERNOON VISIT TO HQE HE HAD TELEPHONED THE PRIME MINISTER IN SAIGON TO INFORM HIM THAT THE SITUATION WAS CHANGING BY THE HOUR AND THAT THE ESTIMATES OF THE POTENTIAL EVACUEES WOULD BE INCREASING.

4. TRUONG SAID THAT HE HAD EXTRACTED A PROMISE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO ESTABLISH A SPECIAL BODY OF CABINET REPRESENTATIVES WITH DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY IN MR-1, HEADED BY ONE OF THE FOUR DEPUTY PRIME MINISTERS, TO DEAL WITH THE PRESENT PROBLEMS OF THE CIVILIAN POPULATION AND IN PLANNING THE POTENTIAL MOVEMENT SOUTH. TRUONG SAID THAT HE HAD NO CIVILIAN AUTHORITY AND REQUIRES CABINET REPRESENTATIVES ON THE SCENE TO MAKE THE CIVILIAN DECISIONS NECESSARY TO EXPEDITE THIS PROGRAM.

5. COMMENT: GENERAL TRUONG'S MOOD THROUGHOUT THIS CONVERSATION WAS GREATLY IMPROVED COMPARED WITH THE DISTRESS HE HAS CONVEYED DURING OUR LAST SEVERAL MEETINGS. HIS CONCERN FOR THE FATE OF THE CIVILIAN POPULATION AS A CONSEQUENCE OF CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TACTICAL MILITARY DECISIONS, THE REASONS FOR WHICH HE DOES NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND, IS GENUINE. TRUONG TOLD APO THAT HE FELT "LIGHT", AS IF A HEAVY BURDEN HAD BEEN LIFTED, AND ACTUALLY LAUGHED WHEN RELATING HIS REQUEST TO HAVE THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ASSIGNED TO THE MILITARY REGION. HE IS STILL, HOWEVER, DEEPLY DISTURBED AT THE TACTICAL

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IMPLICATIONS OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE AIRBORNE.  
TULL UNQTE  
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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** EVACUATION PLANS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MINISTERIAL VISITS  
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